

WHAT IS IMMODESTY IN WOMAN'S DRESS?

BY WINONA WILCOX

"The gentler sex no longer dresses; it undresses," said Mrs. Amelia E. Barr, writer of many wholesome novels, on the occasion of her 85th birthday. "Half-portion gowns are too much in evidence."

Women's dress never lacks some feature which can be condemned as indelicate, but the latest immodesty, the greatest in its history, is the rise in its price. Half-portion gowns are about all the average woman can afford, if the H. C. of clothing continues to increase.

"The war" explains even the new price tags on kitchen aprons. "The war" has proved a marvelously convenient trench for concealing the exploiters of the American pocketbook. Women cannot destroy this hidden enemy, but they ought not to be ignorant of his existence. They are going to put more money into clothing in this country in 1917 than was ever spent in any other 12 months.

What are they going to get in return for it?

Spangles, tinsel and sheen—unless they begin to choose wisely.

Fashion journals call this "the age of gold" in woman's apparel. Tissues of bullion and trimmings of semi-precious stones woven into designs taken from cathedral windows go to the making of many a ball gown which brings a most immodest price.

The originals may be works of art—nevertheless the imitations are the second great immorality of present fashion. For according to the ethics of art, there is real beauty in the commonest fabric when it is put to an honest use, but all pretense is a scandal!

To make the most of her clothing budget under the 1917 price scale, woman will have to learn sharp distinctions of this kind. She must perceive the difference between surface

and quality. She now pays heedlessly for glitter, color and sparkle because she lost her genuine delight in the quality of fabrics when she stopped weaving the cloth.

The curve of a woman's figure is the motif of every well designed garment; it becomes immodest only as the beholder sees it so; but woman sacrificed her appreciation of "fit" when she ceased to plan, cut and sew and accepted the manufacturer's standard sizes for the dimensions nature gave her.

Many a girl wears a dress which is too low in the neck, or too thin or too short, not because she is brazen, as cer critics claim, but because she has never been taught the first principle of good taste—that appropriate dress is the only perfect dress.

Shoes and millinery now belong in the same class, so far as cost and changing fashions go. Perhaps there is no better example of "immoral"—that is, inartistic dressing—than the wearing of white shoes at \$12 a pair in muddy weather; the high cost of their upkeep is one which girls often fail to consider.

Most crime is due to ignorance, say the reformers, and immodesties in dress, whether of style, quality or price, amount to much the same thing. We take great pains to train girls to earn money, but in the name of the economical independence of the feminists, why do we not teach them how to spend?

BIG MOOSE XMAS CELEBRATION.

Humboldt Park Lodge, No. 521, Loyal Order of Moose, opens its annual Christmas festival tonight when a giant Christmas tree will blaze forth at 7 o'clock at Kedzie av. and Logan blvd. Celebration is for all Northwest Side folks, and especially for youngsters, an announcement says. Presents will be given to 2,000 children. Music and vocal numbers.